

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the non-final Office Action mailed on January 25, 2006. Claims 1-23 are pending, claims 2 and 10 are cancelled, and claims 1, 3-8, 9, 11-15 are amended. Claims 24-28 are new. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 2-10 and 15-23 are allowable. Applicants have elected to amend the claims to recite the subject matter of dependent claims 2, 9, 10, and 15 in independent form as claims 1, 9, 24 and 15, respectively, with each claim incorporating by amendment the subject matter of independent claim 1. In view of the foregoing amendments, as well as the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in complete condition for allowance and request reconsideration of the application in this regard.

Rejection of Claims

Claims 1 and 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,127,288 to Kiyama (hereinafter *Kiyama*). Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Kiyama* in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0173346 to Renken et al. Applicants have amended claim 1 to add the subject matter of original dependent claim 2, which the Examiner has indicated as allowable. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn. Claim 9, which was indicated to be allowable, is rewritten in independent form, and claims 11-14 are amended to depend from allowable claim 9. Accordingly, Applicants further request that the rejections of claims 11-13 and 14 be withdrawn.

New Claims

As mentioned above, new independent claim 24 represents the combination of the subject matter found in original claims 1 and 10, the latter of which the Examiner has indicated as allowable. New claims 25-28 depend from independent claim 24 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 24.

Conclusion

Applicants have made a bona fide effort to respond to each and every requirement set forth in the Office Action. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is submitted to be in complete condition for allowance and, accordingly, a timely notice of allowance to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event that any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicants do not any believe fees are dues in connection with filing this communication other than an excess claims fee. If, however, any additional fees are necessary as a result of this communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any under-payment or fees associated with this communication or credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,
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